DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 396 869 RC 020 498

AUTHOR	Moore, Joan, Ed.; Pinderhughes, Raquel, Ed.
TITLE	In the Barrios: Latinos and the Underclass Debate.
SPONS AGENCY	Russell Sage Foundation, New York, N.Y.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-87154-613-2
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	291p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Russell Sage Foundation/CUP Services, 750 Cascadillo St., P.O. Box 6525, Ithaca, NY 14851 (hardback: ISBN-0-87154-612-4, $49.95; paperback: ISBN-0-87154-613-2, $16.95).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Collected Works - General (020)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Community Change; *Community Characteristics; Community Study; Cubans; Cultural Influences; Demography; *Economic Factors; Educational Attainment; Family Characteristics; *Hispanic Americans; Immigrants; Immigration; Mexican Americans; *Poverty; Poverty Areas; Puerto Ricans; Social Problems; *Urban Areas
IDENTIFIERS	Latinos; *Underclass

ABSTRACT

This book includes nine articles that broaden current debates on the American urban "underclass" by assessing the circumstances of inner-city Latino communities. An introduction provides background information on the U.S. Latino population and addresses factors related to urban poverty and to the "underclass" debate, including economic restructuring, immigration, concentration effects, and the role of the State. First coined to describe persistent, concentrated poverty in Chicago's Black neighborhoods, William Julius Wilson used the term "underclass" to refer to the new face of poverty, and traced its origins to economic restructuring. Articles in this book challenge stereotypes about the nature of poverty and address the complexity of cultural, demographic, and historical forces that have shaped poor Latino communities in New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Houston, Chicago, Albuquerque, Laredo, and Tucson. Studies of Latino neighborhoods in these cities focus on income, employment, housing, education, crime, household structure, family resources, ethnic relations, and sense of community. Chapters are: (1) "Puerto Ricans in Sunset Park, Brooklyn: Poverty Amidst Ethnic and Economic Diversity" (Mercer L. Sullivan); (2) "Barrios in Transition" (Joan Moore, James Diego Vigil); (3) "Central Americans in Los Angeles: An Immigrant Community in Transition" (Norma Chinchilla, Nora Hamilton, James Loucky); (4) "Cubans in Miami" (Alex Stepick III, Guillermo Grenier); (5) "Economic Restructuring and Latino Growth in Houston" (Nestor P. Rodriguez); (6) "The Quest for Community: Puerto Ricans in Chicago" (Felix M. Padilla); (7) "Historical Poverty, Restructuring Effects, and Integrative Ties: Mexican American Neighborhoods in a Peripheral Sunbelt Economy" (Phillip B. Gonzales); (8) "Persistent Poverty, Crime, and Drugs: U.S.-Mexican Border Region" (Avelardo Valdez); and (9) "U.S. Mexicans in the Borderlands: Being Poor Without the Underclass" (Carlos Velez-Ibanez). Includes a bibliography with over 300 citations and an index. (LP)

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